



**Sermon Series:** Why I believe part 4

**Sermon Title:** Why I believe - Prayer

**Date:** January 23, 2022

**Big Idea:** Prayer is the lifeblood of a victorious Christian life

**James 5:16** The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective

We examine three reasons you should make prayer a priority in your life

**Reason 1: Jesus relied on prayer**

Jesus, the Son of God, God in human flesh, depended on prayer – His life was a life of prayer. Time and again, in the gospels, we read about Jesus praying. Sometimes it was a short prayer other times Jesus spent longer times in prayer (**Luke 5:16**). Jesus' prayers showed His dependence on the Father and demonstrated that He ultimately submitted to His Father's will.

Jesus' disciples saw him doing amazing things and saw that he was an amazing prayer. They said, "Lord, teach us to pray." (**Luke 11:1**)

Jesus knew His mission, and he prioritized His time in prayer with His Heavenly Father.

**Reason 2: We have an enemy who preys upon us**

There is a spiritual battle all around us and the enemy's motive is to take you out and make you ineffective for God's kingdom. (**1 Peter 5:8, Mathew 26:41**). Some of Satan's most effective attacks are to make you busy, hurried, noisy, or distracted. Satan knows when you don't pray, you are vulnerable, but when you pray you have the forces of heaven behind you.

In Daniel 10 we see Daniel praying and after weeks of delay an answer comes to him when an angel appears to him in a vision and explained that a fallen angel kept him from delivering the message (**Daniel 10:12-14**).

Ephesians 6:12 tells us plainly <sup>12</sup>**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12 NIV**

Ephesians 6 tells us to put on the armor of God and to pray in order to stand against the devil's schemes. (**Ephesians 6:18**)

### Reason 3: Prayer reveals God's will

Three times Paul asked God to remove this painful thorn that was tormenting him, and God said "no." At that point Paul knew God's will for him. **2 Corinthians 12:7b-9a**

There are also times when we know God's will, because when He answers with "yes". In Luke 1 we read an account of where a priest named Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth did not have any children and they were both VERY OLD so it was unlikely they were going to have children but they prayed about it anyway. And God heard their prayers and answered with a "yes". He sent an angel to Zechariah (**Luke 1:12-14**). Zechariah and Elizabeth knew God's will for them by how He answered their prayer.

When you pray, you are not giving God any new information about your situation. He already knows everything you need even before you ask it. Prayer does not change God's mind by giving Him new information, but prayer does change situations;

Here are a few suggestions that will make your prayer time effective. **First**, get a pen and a \$1.99 notebook and sit at a table or desk and write down your prayers. Your prayers won't ramble or simply be repetitive. It will keep you awake and alert. If you write them down, it will also allow you, months and years later to review them and see how God answered them.

**Second**, set a time to pray. Whatever time works best for you – 5AM, 10 at night, 2 in the afternoon. Set a time ahead of time because if you don't your schedule will fill up and time with God will not be a priority.

**Third**, have a structure for your prayers. One simple model you can use is the **PART model. Praise Admit Request Thank** Start out by praising God for who He is. Then admit and confess your sins to Him, then bring your requests to Him – pray for yourself. Beyond that, pray for your family, friends, your church, and Christians around the world, then thank God for all he has done.

**Fourth** and finally, take time to be quiet so that you can listen to God. Take time to talk to God and then spend some time in silence listening to Him. Often when God speaks to us, it isn't in an audible voice. But it is the clearest thought you could have. And it is one of these "aha" moments, and it ALWAYS lines up with scripture.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Why should we take time to pray if God has already predetermined future events?**
- **How would you counsel a Christian who says he or she does not have time to pray?**
- **Do you have a regular prayer time with God? Why or why not**
- **Describe a time when you saw a direct answer to your prayer**